

Message Text

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ACTION OPIC-06

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 EB-08 AGRE-00 TRSE-00 COME-00

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 AID-05 /040 W

-----016687 170031Z /75

R 151000Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4897

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DEPT PASS OPIC

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: EINV, CM

SUBJ: RETURN OF WESTERN CORN PROJECT

REF: (A) YAOUNDE 1169, (B) YAOUNDE 1038

1. SNI HAS ACCEPTED EMBASSY SUGGESTION AND HAS NEMED AMERICAN TRAINED AGRONOMIST, AYUK TAKAM, AS TECHNICAL ADVISOR TO FOUMBAN CORN PROJECT. (REFTTEL A) TAKAM WILL REGULARLY VISIT PROJECT SITE FROM HIS STATION NEAR BAMENDA. IN DISCUSSION WITH USAID SENIOR AGRICULTURE OFFICER TAKAM SAID THAT SNI HOPES TO CONTINUE CORN PROJECT THROUGH THIS YEAR WHILE SEARCHING FR ANOTHER FIRM TO TAKE OVER. DR. ALLEN WILL LEAVE FOUMBAN AS SOON AS SNI CAN LOCATE FULL-TIME CAMEROONIAN AGRONOMIST TO REPLACE HIM. IN THE MEANTIME, WORK IS MOVING FORWARD AND TAKAM BELIEVES AS MUCH AS 60 HECTARES WILL BE PLANTED THIS YEAR.

2. TAKAM STATED THAT SNI WAS STILL VERY MUCH INTERESTED IN WORKING WITH E "SERIOUS" AMERICAN FIRM ON THE CORN PROJECT. INDEED, HE CLAIMED THAT PRESIDENT AHIDJO HIMSELF HAS TOLD SNI TO SEEK US INVESTORS.

3. TAKAM STATEMENT INDICATES THAT AT LEAST ON GURC SIDE, THERE

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IS STILL CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN WORKING WITH US FIRM ON CORN PROJECT, WHICH ALL INVOLVED AGREE HAS EXCELLENT POTENTIAL. IN VIEW OF THIS INTEREST WE WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF OPIC AND DEPARTMENT COULD INFORM US FIRMS OF THIS OPPORTUNITY. ONE FIRM WHICH MIGHT BE INTERESTED IS GENERAL MILLS, WHOSE WHOLLY-OWNED SUBSIDIARY GORTON'S OF GLOUCESTER HAS A SHARE IN CREVETTE DU CAMEROUN (CRECAM) A LOCAL SHRIMPING COMPANY.

THEY HAVE PREVIOUSLY SHOWN INTEREST IN MILLING OPERATION AND
GENERAL MANAGER OF CRECAM IS A CAMEROONIAN ALREADY WELL PLUGGED
INTO SNI AND OTHER GURC AGENCIES. ANOTHER POSSIBILITY IS CARGILL,
INC. OF CHICAGO. R. HOFFELMAN, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF
CARGILL SUBSIDIARY HANDELFVERENEGING WAS RECENTLY IN DOUALA
AND SHOWED INTEREST IN POSSIBLY TAKING OVER CORN PROJECT. THESE
MERLY OFFERED AS ILLUSTRATIVE. EMBASSY IS CONFIDENT THAT
OPIC AND/OR DEPARTMENT CANT FIND POTENTIAL U.S. PARTNER AND NOT
LET THIS IMPORTANT PROJECT GO BY DEFAULT TO CAJADIAN OR OTHER
COMPETITORS.

4. PLEASE ADVISE ACTION TAKE.

5. DECLASSIFY UPON RECEIPT.
SMYTHE

NOTE BY OCT: MESSAGE DELAYED IN TRANSMISSION.

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NNN

Message Attributes

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